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SUBJECT: FINLAND WELCOMES PRESIDENT BUSH'S CLIMATE CHANGE
LEADERSHIP

REF: A. SECSTATE 74417

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 75287

[1](#)1. (SBU) Following the President's new proposal on climate change, Econoff briefed Outi Berghall, Director of the International Climate Change Project at the Finnish Ministry of Environment and Vice Chair of the Kyoto Ad Hoc Working Group (AWG) on Further Commitments, as well as key contacts at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Finnish government contacts welcomed the President's climate proposal, stating it would greatly strengthen international resolve to address climate change. Berghall was especially intrigued by the Bush Administration's plan to promote funding for climate-friendly initiatives in developing countries. Berghall plans to brief Environment Minister Paula Lehtomaki on this "significant announcement" soon; Lehtomaki sits on the GOF's Climate and Energy Security Ministerial Committee. MFA contacts added that U.S. leadership in addressing the challenges of climate change is perfect timing and that the message should be well received during the up-coming G8 meetings.

[1](#)2. (SBU) According to Berghall, EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, while speaking at an energy seminar in Helsinki on June 1, said the Bush Administration proposal was "the most important news this year" related to climate change. He continued by stating the proposal has already generated a great deal of interest in the EU, and he expects this proposal to be a starting point for additional international cooperation.

[1](#)3. (U) Thus far Finnish press coverage on the new proposal has been light. Under the leadership of Ambassador Ware, Embassy Helsinki plans to engage additional high ranking government and media contacts to build Finnish public and governmental support for the President's climate change proposal. Traditionally the GOF has been a strong European advocate for addressing climate change by pushing energy efficiency and clean energy technology.

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